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NAMRU-6 Holds Change of Command Ceremony

Released: 5/1/2017

By Lt. J. Regeimbal, NAMRU-6 Public Affairs Officer



(left to right) Captain Jacqueline Rychnovsky, Commanding Officer (former), Naval Medical Research Center, Captain Guillermo Pimentel, Commanding Officer, U.S. Naval Medical Research Unit No. 6, Captain Adam Armstrong, Commanding Officer, Naval Medical Research Center, Rear Adm. Paul Pearigen, Commander, Navy Medicine West and the Honorable Brian Nichols, U.S. Ambassador to Peru, celebrate the NAMRU-6 Change of Command with a cake cutting.

PERU – Capt. Guillermo “Billy” Pimentel relieved Capt. Adam W. Armstrong as commanding officer of U.S. Naval Medical Research Unit 6 (NAMRU-6), Peru, March 27, 2017.

The change of command ceremony was attended by the Honorable Brian Nichols, U.S. Ambassador to Peru; Rear Adm. Paul D. Pearigen, Commander, Navy Medicine West; Vice Adm. Silvio Javier “Alva” Villamon, General Director of Personnel, Peruvian Navy; Rear Adm. Julio Cesar “Cacho” Moran, Peruvian Navy Surgeon General, and numerous distinguished guests, visitors, and families. The change of command was presided over by Capt. Jacqueline Rychnovsky, commanding officer, Naval Medical Research Center, prior to her retirement, April 27, 2017.

The change of command ceremony holds unique significance in the U.S. Navy. The change of authority from one commanding officer to the next is celebrated in a ceremony steeped in tradition, yet it is not officially formalized. Instead, the tradition is handed down from one generation to the next keeping with the importance it holds. It is a tradition full of music, pomp and circumstance; reverence for Naval Service and those who came before us, and respect for the authority and responsibility granted to a new skipper (commanding officer).

Pimentel joined the U.S. Navy Reserve in 1988 at the tender age of 17. He completed his enlisted service in 1996, and returned to school to complete a bachelor of science in Industrial

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Microbiology and a master of science in Biology from the University of Puerto Rico, Mayaguez Campus. He completed his Ph.D. in Plant Pathology/Mycology from Washington State University in 1999. Following the completion of his education, he returned to Naval Service in 1999 as a commissioned Lieutenant in the Medical Service Corps.

Pimentel is a veteran of Persian Gulf War and served at Naval Medical Center Portsmouth, U.S. Naval Medical Research Unit No. 3 - Cairo, the Naval Medical Research Center (NMRC), and NAMRU-6 as an executive officer and now, commanding officer. Pimentel led the deployment of the Navy Mobile Labs during the Operation United Assistance Ebola response, and is a senior leader in the microbiology community of the Medical Service Corps.

Armstrong departed NAMRU-6 after four years of service as both executive officer and commanding officer. Armstrong assumed command of NMRC, on April 6, 2017.

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